

preliminary analysis was completed during the summer and fall of 1997. The developed alternative consisted of: (A) low management intensity; retention of more than the prescribed amount of standing green trees and down logs (20–30% retention), (B) conventional management intensity; retention of prescribed amounts of standing green trees and down logs (15% retention), (C) No old-growth harvest, and (D) No Action. All action alternatives were developed to avoid forest fragmentation and system road construction. Results of the above analysis indicated a potential for significant effects to the human environment, hence the need for documentation with the Environmental Impact Statement.

The Forest Service will be seeking additional information, comment and assistance from Federal, State, local agencies, tribes, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested or affected by the proposed project. Additional input will be used to help verify the existing analysis and determine if additional issues and alternatives should be developed. This input will be used in preparation of the draft EIS.

The scoping process will include the following:

- Identification of potential additional issues;
- Identification of issues to be analyzed in depth;
- Elimination of insignificant issues or those which have been covered by a relevant previous environmental process;
- Exploration of potential additional alternatives based on the issues identified during the scoping process; and
- Verification of and potential addition to environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives (i.e. direct, indirect, and cumulative effects and connected actions).

The draft EIS is expected to be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to be available for public review by February 28, 1998. The comment period on the draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the EPA publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes it is important to give reviewers notice at this early stage of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, a reviewer of a draft EIS must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v.*

NRDC, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft EIS stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final EIS may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F. 2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir., 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45-day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final EIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft EIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft EIS or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. (Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.)

The final EIS is scheduled to be completed in June, 1998. In the final EIS, the Forest Service is required to respond to comments and responses received during the comment period that pertain to the environmental consequences discussed in the draft EIS and applicable laws, regulations, and policies considered in making the decision regarding this proposal. Rick Scott, District Ranger, is the responsible official and as responsible official, he will document the Christy Basin Timber Sales and restoration project decision and rationale in a Record of Decision. That decision will be subject to Forest Service Appeal Regulations (36 CFR Part 215).

Dated: January 5, 1998.

Rick Scott,

District Ranger.

[FR Doc. 98–1198 Filed 1–16–98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce (DOC) has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for

clearance the following proposal for collection of information under provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Title: Capital Construction Fund Agreement and Certificate.

Agency Form Number: NOAA 88–14.

OMB Approval Number: 0648–0090.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Burden: 2,250 hours.

Number of Respondents: 1,000.

Avg. Hours Per Response: 2.25 hours.

Needs and Uses: The Merchant

Marine Act provides for the administration of the Capital Construction Fund (CCF) by NOAA. This program enables fishermen to construct, reconstruct, or (under limited circumstances) acquire fishing vessels with before-tax, rather than after-tax, dollars. NOAA collects information from fishermen to determine their eligibility to participate in the program and to certify completion of the agreement objectives.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: On occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain benefits.

OMB Desk Officer: David Rostker, (202) 395–3897.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Linda Engelmeier, DOC Forms Clearance Officer, (202) 482–3272, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to David Rostker, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10202, New Executive Office Building, 725 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20503.

Dated: January 2, 1998.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.

[FR Doc. 98–1264 Filed 1–16–98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of the Census

Census 2000 Special Place Facility Questionnaire

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing